

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 BIB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 EA-06 NEA-10 SAM-01 IO-10 EB-07

OMB-01 /100 W

----- 103275

R 091334Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0989

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UR

SUBJECT: INTERIM REPORT ON ELECTION SPEECHES BY SOVIET LEADERS

REF: LENINGRAD 856 (NOTAL)

1. CURRENT SERIES OF PRE-ELECTION SPEECHES BY TOP SOVIET LEADERSHIP IS NOW TWO-THIRDS COMPLETED AND SOME PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS MAY BE IN ORDER BEFORE THE MAJOR SPEECHES OF THE CLOSING PHASE ARE GIVEN BY THE SENIOR LEADERS. AS BEFORE, NEWSPAPERS OF LOCAL JURISDICTION GIVE FULLER TEXTS OF SPEECHES THAN DO PRAVDA; WE HAVE IN HAND IN MOSCOW LOCAL TEXTS FOR SEVEN LEADERS TO DATE (GRECHKO, GRISHIN, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GROMYKO, MASHEROV, RASHIDOV, AND KAPITONOV) AND EXPECT

THEN FOR ROMANOV, KIRILENKO, AND MAZUROV (REFTEL).
LIVE TEXTS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR KOSYGIN, PODGORNY,
AND BREZHNEV ON RADIO AND TELEVISION.

2. THE ORDER OF APPEARANCE OF THE SPEAKERS IS MUCH
LIKE THAT OF 1974 WITH THE LOWER-RANKING SPEAKERS
TAKING TO THE STUMPT FIRST; THE LAST THREE DAYS ARE
CAPPED BY KOSYGIN, PODGORNY, AND BREZHNEV IN THAT
ORDER. ONE ANOMALY THIS YEAR IS THAT KUNAYEV OPENED
THE SERIES WHEREAS IN 1974 HE WAS SCHEDULED TO SPEAK
IN THE TOP THIRD OF THE LEADERSHIP GROUP. WE ARE
INCLINED TO THINK THAT ANDROPOV'S FAILURE TO SPEAK
IN THE MIDDLE GROUP AS HE DID IN 1974 MAY BE ATTRIBUTED
MORE TO HIS MEDICAL PROBLEMS THAN TO ANY RISE IN STATUS.
FAILURE ON HIS PART TO SPEAK ON JUNE 9 OR 10 WOULD
PROBABLY BE THE RESULT OF MEDICAL DIFFICULTIES. KULAKOV
SHOULD SPEAK IN THE LAST WEEK OF THE SERIES WHICH COULD
MARK A STEP UP IN THE STATUS RANKINGS AND PUT
HIM -- ON THE BASIS OF THIS NOT INFALLIBLE INDICATOR --
A NOTCH AHEAD OF MAZUROV WHO SPOKE ON JUNE 4.

3. ONE INDICATOR OF POLITICAL ATTITUDES IS THE
FREQUENCY OF CITATIONS OF BREZHNEV BY THE VARIOUS
SPEAKERS, THE FORM OF ADDRESS CHOSEN, AND WHETHER OR NOT
THE SPEAKER REPEATS THE CUSTOMARY FORMULATION OF THE
"CPSU POLITBURO HEADED BY BREZHNEV." PRACTICE VARIES
WIDELY -- FROM A SINGLE CITATION OF BREZHNEV BY
MAZUROV TO 8 CITATIONS BY SOLOMENTSEV. IN ONLY TWO
CASES HAVE THE LOCAL TEXTS CONTAINED MORE CITATIONS
THAN THE PRAVDA VERSION: THIS WAS SO FOR MASHEROV
AND KAPITONOV. FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF WASHINGTON
ANALYSTS, THE NUMBERS OF CITATIONS OF BREZHNEV AND
HIS POSITION AS "HEAD OF THE POLITBURO" FOLLOW AFTER
THE NAME OF EACH SPEAKER AS OF JUNE 6: MAZUROV 1/0;
MASHEROV 1/0 (3/0 IN LOCAL PAPER); RASHIDOV 2/0;
DEMICHEV 2/1; KATUSHEV 2/1; GRISHIN AND ROMANOV 3/0;
GRECHKO 3/1; PELSHE 3/1; POLYANSKIY 3/1; DOLGIKH
AND SHCHERBITSKIY 4/0; KAPITONOV 4/1 (5/1 IN LOCAL
PAPER); USTINOV 5/0; GROMYKO 5/1; KUNAYEV 7/3;
SOLOMETSEV 8/1.

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4. AN ODD THING ABOUT POLYANSKIY IS THAT HE
REFRAINED SOMEWHAT OSTENTATIOUSLY FROM USING BREZHNEV'S
TITLE OF GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CPSU CC AND INSTEAD
ADDRESSED HIM AS "COMRADE" WHICH IS CERTAINLY AN
APPROPRIATE TITLE FOR A FELLOW MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO.
BUT POLYANSKIY IS THE ONLY LEADER TO DATE TO AVOID USING
BREZHNEV'S TITLE. GRISHIN IS THE ONLY SPEAKER TO DATE TO

LIST THE TOP TROYKA -- BREZHNEV, PODGORNYY, AND KOSYGIN,
BUT HE DID THIS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THEIR ELECTION
DISTRICTS BEING IN MOSCOW CITY.

5. COOLEST SPEECH SO FAR WAS GIVEN BY MAZUROV
(REFTEL) WHO REFERRED TO BREZHNEV ONLY ONCE AND IN
THAT REFERENCE GAVE HIM AND THE LEADING ORGANS CREDIT
FOR BUILDING UP THE ECONOMIC AND MILITARY POWER OF
THE USSR. MAZUROV SPOKE WARMLY AT SOME LENGTH IN
LENINGRAD ABOUT THE ECONOMIC AND MANAGERIAL INITIATIVES
OF LENINGRAD. HE BALANCED HIS LIST OF MANAGERIAL
IMPROVEMENTS WITH MENTION OF THE NEED TO TAKE A PARTY
APPROACH TOWARD ECONOMIC DECISIONS AND TO INCREASE
PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROGRAMS. IN MENTIONING
WAGE INCREASES, HE STRESSED THAT GREAT ATTENTION WAS
PAID TO MAINTAINING RETAIL PRICE STABILITY. MAZUROV'S
REMARKS ON FOREIGN POLICY AND DETENTE BORE DOWN HARD
ON THE CLASS NATURE OF SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY AND SOVIET
SUPPORT FOR STRUGGLE AGAINST COLONIALISM AND NEO-COLONIALISM
AS WELL AS IMPERIALIST EXPANSIONISM AND AGGRESSION.

6. ONLY CASE OF SUBSTANTIVE BLUE-PENCILLING BY PRAVDA
OCCURRED IN KUNAYEV'S SPEECH. LOCAL VERSION INCLUDED
A QUOTATION FROM A SPEECH BY BREZHNEV ABOUT THE
ADOPTION AT THE 25TH PARTY CONGRESS OF THE 15-YEAR PLAN,
FROM 1976 TO 1990. BOTH THE CONGRESS AND THE SUBSEQUENT
SUPREME SOVIET SESSION ARE TO DISCUSS AND ADOPT BOTH
THE TENTH FIVE-YEAR PLAN AND THE 15-YEAR PLAN, WHICH
BREZHNEV DESCRIBED MORE THAN A YEAR AGO AS A
"PROGRAMMATIC DOCUMENT" OF GREAT SIGNIFICANCE. NO
OTHER SPEAKER IN CURRENT ELECTION SPEECHES HAS MENTIONED THIS
DOCUMENT, WHICH APPARENTLY IS CAUSING GREAT DIFFICULTY.
NOT MUCH PROGRESS HAS BEEN REPORTED IN THE PRESS
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ON DRAFTING THE 15-YEAR PROGRAM, AND IT SEEMS EXPEDIENT
FOR ALMOST ALL THE SPEECH WRITERS TO PASS OVER THIS
MATTER IN SILENCE. WHY IT WAS MENTIONED BY KUNAYEV
AND PICKED UP IN THE KAZAKHSTAN PRESS IS SOMETHING
OF A PUZZLE.

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USIA-06 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 EA-06 NEA-10 SAM-01 IO-10 EB-07

OMB-01 /100 W

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R 091334Z JUN 75

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7. AN IDEA IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT WAS
ADVANCED BY BELORUSSIAN PARTY LEADER MASHEROV WHOP
PROPOSED THAT A NEW CRITERION OF ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE
BASED ON POTENTIAL PRODUCTION BE ADOPTED. THE EXISTING
CRITERIA WERE CRITIZED AS MERELY REGISTERING GROSS
PRODUCT WITHOUT CONSIDERATION OF QUALITY OR POTENTIAL
CAPACITY. MASHEROV ALSO ADDRESSED SOME OF THE DRAWBACKS
OF THE COLLECTIVIST PSYCHOLOGY SO BELOVED BY SOVIET
SOCIAL ENGINEERS. THE DRAWBACKS INCLUDE COLLECTIVE
COVERUPS OF INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP SINS AND OMISSIONS,
CLIQUEs, AND REFUSAL TO ADMIT OR DISCLOSE MISDEEDS.

8. A FIARLY COMMON THEME IN THE LEADERSHIP SPEECHES
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IS THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE DECLINING ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL LEVELS OF THE WESTERN COUNTRIES AS COMPARED
TO THE STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF THE SOVIET UNION
AND EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. THIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A

PROPAGANDA STAPLE, BUT FOR OBVIOUS REASONS THE RING OF CONVICTION IS STRONGER THIS YEAR. COUPLED WITH THIS IS EMPHASIS ON THE BALANCE OF WORLD FORCES WHICH IS ALLEGEDLY SHIFTING IN FAVOR OF THE SOVIET CAMP. USTINOV PREDICTABLY MADE A GREAT DEAL OF THIS IN HIS SPEECH, AS DID MARSHAL GRECHKO. PONOMAREV ALSO HARKENED TO THIS THEME AND ADDED TO IT A FEW WORDS ABOUT NATO. HE DESCRIBED THE PRESENT AS A PERIOD OF STEADY AND IRREVERSIBLE ADVANCEMENT OF SOCIALISM AND THE ROLE OF THE SOCIALIST CAMP IN WORLD AFFAIRS. THE VICTORY OF THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE OVER FASCISM WAS TERMED BY PONOMAREV AS PREGNANT WITH WORLD SIGNIFICANCE.

9. WE WERE STRUCK BY MARSHAL GRECHKO'S STATEMENT THAT HE IS NOT ONLY A MEMBER OF THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE BUT WORKS UNDER ITS LEADERSHIP. PRESUMABLY THIS REMARK WAS INTENDED ON THE SURFACE TO ALLAY FREQUENT SPECULATIONS IN THE WESTERN PRESS THAT HE TAKES STANDS AT VARIANCE WITH THOSE OF THE POLITBURO. WHETHER SIMILAR ASSURANCES ARE NECESSARY INSIDE THE SOVIET UNION IS AN INTRIGUING QUESTION, BUT THIS IS THE ONLY STATEMENT OF THIS KIND THAT WE HAVE SEEN IN GRECHKO'S SPEECHES.

10. FEW OF THE LEADERS CHOSE TO SPEAK ABOUT SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS OR THE PEACE PROGRAM AND DETENTE. FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO, OBVIOUSLY, HAD THE MOST TO SAY ON THESE SUBJECTS; IN ADDITION TO PLUGGING SUMMITRY AND THE VLADIVOSTOK TALKS, HE REFERRED TO BREZHNEV'S UPCOMING SUMMIT VISIT TO THE U.S. AS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN COLLABORATION. SURPRISINGLY, THE CPSU PERSONNEL CHIEF, KAPITONOV, WENT OUTSIDE HIS JURISDICTION TO SPEAK WARMLY OF THE SOVIET PEACE PROGRAM AND EFFORTS TO MAKE IRREVERSIBLE THE RELAXATION OF TENSIONS. POLYANSKIY SPOKE ALMOST PERFUNCTORILY OF THE PEACE PROGRAM. CULTURE MINISTER DEMICHEV SPOKE OF THE PEACE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROGRAM AND THE IMPROVED INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR THE POLICY OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE, BUT HESITANTLY THIS SAYING THAT SOVIET BACKING OF THE NATIONAL-LIBERATION STRUGGLE HAS RAISED SOVIET PRESTIGE IMMENSELY. IT IS CLEAR THAT ANY SIGNIFICANT PRONOUNCEMENTS ON BILATERAL AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS WILL COME, IF AT ALL, IN THE SPEECHES OF THE TOP THREE LEADERS WITH BREZHNEV HAVING THE LAST WORD ON THIS SUBJECT AND IN THE SERIES OF SPEECHES.

11. THE MOST STRIKING THING ABOUT LEADERSHIP SPEECHES

SO FAR IS THE RELATIVE PAUCITY OF CONTENT. WITH THE
EXCEPTION OF THE ABOVE ITEMS, VERY LITTLE OF INTEREST
HAS YET APPEARED, LEAVING THE FIELD OPEN FOR THE
SENIOR LEADERS WHO MAKE THEIR SPEECHES IN THE FINAL
WEEK OF THE CYCLE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION CAMPAIGNS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MOSCOW07928
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750201-0198
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750668/aaaackkk.tel
Line Count: 283
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LENINGRAD 856
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 APR 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <30 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTERIM REPORT ON ELECTION SPEECHES BY SOVIET LEADERS
TAGS: PINT, UR, (MAZUROV, K T)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006